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ABSTRACT

This teaching guide presents lessons for a social studies unit dealing with 18th century culture of the inhabitants of the Aleutian Islands. The unit is designed for intermediate and junior-high school students. Rather than providing a predigested picture of Aleut culture, the unit presents remaining evidence of that culture. Students reconstruct the culture by studying historical, anthropolcgical, geographical, and archaeological evidence. This is examined for factual information, inherent biases due to source cr method of obtaining the information, and an understanding of the types of information each discipline can provide. Throughout the unit, content is compared and related to students' own lives. Four lessons comprise the unit. In lesson one, focusing on the historical method, students read accounts of the arrival of the first Europeans through two different points of view, the Russian and the Aleut. In lesson two, emphasizing the geographical method, students use maps to study the geography of the Aleutian territory and investigate how the natural resources in that area influence life-style. Lesson three, stressing the anthropological method, provides a chart of an Aleut homesite showing important tools and their composition, giving clues about daily activities and trade. The fourth lesson provides several examples of Aleut folklore to show how it can give an indication of people's values and beliefs. Each lesson includes objectives, listings of materials, background information, and suggested activities. Two oversized maps, included at the back of the guide, are cut into regular page-size sheets. These need to be joined by the teacher. (AV)

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Teacher's Manual for

THE ALEUTS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Social Studies Unit for

Junior High School

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SO009360

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THE ALEUTS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Social Studies Unit for

Junior High School

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Teacher's Manual

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First Sign of Humans

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Book I b: *Strangers: The Russian Side*

Book II : *As The Europeans Saw Them*

Poster: Map of Makushin Bay

Book III: *Floral Resources in Makushin Bay*

Poster: Map of Aleut House Pit

Book IV: *Handbook for Central Aleutian Site*

Book V: *Selections from Aleut Folklore*

Book VI: *Atkan Historical Traditions*

Folklore Handbook for Bilingual Classrooms

INTRODUCTION

This social studies unit was written for intermediate to junior high school students, and deals with the eighteenth century culture of the inhabitants of the Aleutian Islands.

The limits for the study were determined as follows: first, the eighteenth century time limit was chosen since it represents the latest manifestation of Aleut culture before it was almost totally destroyed by Russian and American invaders of later years. It should be understood that pre-contact Aleut culture, like all cultures, was an ongoing and changing culture. However, it is difficult to describe any culture without making it appear as though it is standing still. Pre-contact Aleut culture is even more difficult to depict as a living culture than most because all the descriptions we have were written at a time when many of the customs were coming to abrupt ends. In effect, much of the culture ceased to live just at the point when it was first described.

Second, the area covered in the study is limited to the Aleutian Islands and a portion of the Alaska Peninsula. Although the inhabitants of the Aleutian Islands were by no means a cohesive or even self-conscious

group at the time of contact, they did have a very important common ground: their language, Aleut. There is (and presumably was at the time of contact) a definite dialect difference between eastern Aleut and western Aleut, but the dialects are mutually intelligible. Thus it can be assumed that in pre-contact times the Aleut speakers had more contact with each other, and so shared more cultural traits with each other, than they did with non-Aleut speakers.

The exact eastern boundary between pre-contact Aleuts and the Eskimos of the Alaska Peninsula is difficult to determine, but for purposes of this study that boundary is placed at Port Moller, including the Shumagin Islands in the Aleut-speaking territory (following Krauss's map *Native Peoples and Languages of Alaska, 1974;* see also Dumond's *Prehistoric Ethnic Boundaries on the Alaska Peninsula*, APUA Vol. 16, No. 1 and McCartney's *Prehistoric Aleut Influences at Port Moller, Alaska*, APUA Vol. 14, No. 2 for further discussion of the boundary).

The Pribilof Islands are Aleut-speaking areas today, but have not been dealt with specifically in this unit, since they were apparently not inhabited at the time of contact.

Finally, although other areas of Alaska are today "Aleut areas" (for instance, the upper Alaska Peninsula, Kodiak Island, lower Cook Inlet, and Prince William Sound), those areas have not been included in this unit since

they were traditionally both culturally and linguistically different from the Aleutian Island Aleuts. The language spoken in the "Sugcestun Aleut" areas mentioned above is referred to by Krauss as "Sugpiaq", an Eskimo language (*Native Peoples and Languages of Alaska Map, 1974*).

The Aleuts of the Eighteenth Century does not present a predigested picture of what Aleut culture was in the eighteenth century; rather, it provides the evidence that remains of that culture and asks the student to reconstruct the culture as well as can be done from that evidence.

The evidence falls roughly into five categories, corresponding with five academic disciplines: historical, anthropological, geographical, archaeological, and literary. Students examine the evidence from each of these categories for factual information, inherent biases due to the source or method of obtaining the information, and an understanding of the types of information that each discipline can provide. In addition, students are asked throughout the unit to compare and relate what they are learning with their own lives. It is hoped that students will gain from this unit an understanding of pre-contact Aleut life, a feeling for some of the relationships between a people and their homes, objects, stories, customs, and beliefs, and an ability to examine and appraise objectively various types of information.

LESSON I:

HISTORY & ANTHROPOLOGY

LESSON I: HISTORICAL AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL METHOD AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION:

THE EUROPEAN ACCOUNTS

OBJECTIVES:

To illustrate the generalization, "The same event often looks completely different to two different participants, particularly if they come from different countries, backgrounds, or cultures".

To provide students with knowledge of the European fur traders' and explorers' backgrounds so that their perceptions of the Aleuts can be better understood.

To provide students with some of the early European descriptions of the Aleuts.

To illustrate the historical method and its application in a study of Aleut culture.

To stimulate students to think of Aleut culture from the Aleuts' point of view.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES:

Students should be able to locate the Aleutian Islands on a map and point out their spatial relationship with Russia.

Students should learn something of the history of European exploration in the Aleutians.

Students should begin to fashion a picture of pre-contact Aleut culture based on the historical evidence.

MATERIALS PROVIDED AS PART OF THE UNIT:

Two printed sheets, *The Invaders* and *First Sign of Humans*.

Book IA, *Strangers, The Aleut Side*
Book IB, *Strangers, The Russian Side*
Book II, *As the Europeans Saw Them*

MATERIALS YOU SHOULD HAVE ON HAND:

Map or globe of the world.
Map of the Aleutian Islands or Alaska.
Books from the school library about eighteenth century Russia, Russian exploration in America, the history of Alaska.

RESOURCE LIST OF RELATED MATERIALS:

Books: Bancroft, Hubert Howe, *History of Alaska 1730-1885*, Hafner Publishing Co., Darien, Connecticut; 1970.

Berkh, Vasili, *Chronological History of the Discovery of the Aleutian Islands 1823*, reprinted in Ricks, Melvin B., *The Earliest History of Alaska*, Cook Inlet Historical Society, Anchorage, 1970.

Cook, Captain James, *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, Second Edition, II, London 1785.

Coxe, William, *Account of the Russian Discoveries between Asia and America*, University Microfilms; Ann Arbor, Michigan; 1966.

Golder, F.A., *Bering's Voyages, Volumes I and II*, Octagon Books, Inc.,; New York; 1968.

Ledyard, John, *A Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage*, Quadrangle Books; Chicago; 1963 (Originally 1783).

Miller, Polly and Leon Gordon, *Lost Heritage of Alaska*, Bonanza Books, New York, 1967.

Sarychev, Gavrila A., *Account of a Voyage of Discovery to the North-East of Siberia, the Frozen Ocean and the North-East Sea*, DeCapo Press; New York; 1969.

Veniaminov, Ivan Evseievich Popov, *Notes on the Islands of the Unalaska District*, St. Petersburg 1840 (Reproduced in the Human Relations Area Files, New Haven, Connecticut).

Waxel, Sven, *The Russian Expedition to America*, MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York; 1962.

Map: Krauss, Michael E., *Native Peoples and Languages of Alaska*, Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska, Fairbanks, 1974.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The history of Alaska's Natives was drastically changed by the coming of the white man, particularly from the time Bering's crew first set foot on Alaskan land in 1741. Unfortunately, there are few reliable records of what that history was in pre-contact days. There are descriptions of Native culture at the time of contact, but these are primarily from one point of view: the Europeans'. This social studies unit is an attempt to get beyond the European accounts to try and catch a glimpse of the Aleut side of life in the eighteenth century.

Although the Europeans (primarily Russians, in the early years) presented only one side of the story in their reports of travels in the Aleutians, the fact that they did write <u>something</u> makes their works valuable starting points for a study of Aleut culture. It is from these starting points that this social studies unit is launched, with the first lesson dealing with European descriptions of eighteenth century Aleuts.

Before students can deal with the European descriptions, however, they must come to understand that the descriptions have several inherent limitations because the Europeans were, to varying degrees, unfamiliar with Aleut culture.

The first booklet is designed to point out some of the limitations of European accounts, but also serves to show that some of the Europeans' observations were accurate. It is the students' task to discriminate between the elements in which the Europeans erred through lack of understanding and those in which their judgment can be trusted.

The first booklet, *Strangers*, is actually two books describing the same occurrence through two different points of view: the Russian and the Aleut. Both books are based on an actual occurrence, the arrival in the Aleutian chain of the first group of Russian promyschleniki (fur trapper/entrepreneurs) in September, 1745. The ship was under the command of Mikhail Nevodchikov, and made its first landfall on one of the Near Islands, probably Agattu.

Some background for the two groups of people involved in the confrontation is given in each of the books. To underscore the different interests involved: the Russians were primarily motivated by money. This first group of fur traders, like many after them, came to the Aleutians solely to obtain furs to trade with China and European countries at a large profit. As a group they were not concerned with the Aleuts except as they might help or hinder this economic concern. To the promyschleniki, the

Aleutian chain was simply an extension of the Siberian fur fields where they had been trapping for so many years.

The Aleuts, on the other hand, were concerned primarily with subsistence, a concern which was inextricably tied through spiritual beliefs with proper behavior, bringing children up to be good people, and getting along with family and friends. It can be imagined that their primary concern in the first meeting with the Russians was to secure their personal well-being and to protect the resources which belonged to the village, such as salmon streams and sealing areas, from intrusion. Intruders could cause damage to the Aleuts' relationship with the resources in either natural or supernatural ways: they could use up the food or prevent the Aleuts from obtaining it, thus upsetting the natural relationship, and they could upset the delicate balance the Aleuts maintained with the animals' spirits. The animals upon which the Aleuts depended for food and clothing had to be treated in certain prescribed and respectful ways if a man were to hunt them successfully and any transgression in these customs could result in the animals not allowing themselves to be caught. With the fear of intrusion uppermost in their minds the Aleuts took a defensive posture toward the Russians. They were used to this defensive posture: there were frequent wars between members of the different islands in the chain, and in some cases between two villages on the same island.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

"The Invaders," "The First Sign of Humans," and "Strangers"

Generalizations:

1. The same event often looks completely different to two different participants.

2. When the two participants come from different countries, backgrounds, or cultures, the differences in perceptions are compounded by the different belief system each is operating under.

INTRODUCING THE CONCEPT "POINT OF VIEW"

1. You have been provided with two printed sheets, one entitled *The Invaders*, the other *First Sign of Humans*. These are excerpts from the Aleut and Russian editions of *Strangers* respectively and are to be used as an introduction to the booklet.

Pass one sheet out to each student without indicating that some students are receiving *The Invaders* while others are being given *First Sign of Humans*. Ask the students to read their sheets silently in class, after which a discussion will occur. To obtain greatest impact, do not give any background information to students before giving them the sheets. They should be allowed to draw their own conclusions about what is happening in the stories, just as the participants had to do two hundred years ago. (Note: do not separate the sheets so that only Native students receive *The Invaders* and only non-Native students receive *First Sign of Humans*. It is important that the sheets be handed out at random, so that both Native and non-Native students will have an opportunity to see both sides of the story.)

After students have read the sheets, begin asking questions about their contents, gradually bringing out the point that students had two different sets of information. Examples of questions might be:

a. Describe what happened.

b. Why did the visitors come ashore?

c. Where were the islanders when the visitors came ashore?

d. What did the islanders think of the visitors' actions?

e. What was the visitors' attitude toward the Americans?

f. Why did the visitors return to their ship?

Students will soon discover that there are two different interpretations of the same incident. Discuss briefly the reasons for the difference in stories.

2. Before turning to the entire booklet from which the stories in the sheets were excerpted, provide some background information. For instance, make sure students can locate the Aleutian chain on a map or globe; have them note its spatial relationship with Russia. You might also provide some information on the Russian discovery of Alaska alluded to in the booklet, and some contextual information on Russia in the middle eighteenth century. Now you will be ready to begin work with *Strangers*.

3. *Strangers*, like *The Invaders* and *First Sign of Humans*, is actually two booklets, the Aleut and the Russian accounts of the 1745 fur trapping episode on Agattu Island. Pass the Aleut version to those students who were given *The Invaders* while the Russian version should be given to the students who have read *First Sign of Humans*. You may assign the reading of the booklets to students in the manner best suited to your class: as homework, as silent reading in class, or as oral reading in class. For oral reading have

students read alternately from the two books, first the Russian, then the Aleut account; the booklets were designed so that each section in one booklet has a corresponding section describing the same incident in the other. Each section begins with a Roman numeral and an illustration. Some students might also enjoy dramatizing the action.

Please note that each of the booklets contains a glossary at the end. You might want to discuss some of the words before students begin reading, or allow them to look up those terms which they find difficult on their own.

4. The Russian version of *Strangers* refers to their Aleut counterparts as "Americans". Discuss why they may have used this designation. Do the students think it appropriate? Why or why not?

RULES AND MEANINGS

There are many instances in the two booklets which indicate areas in which the Russians and Aleuts simply did not understand each other, and so acted in a way which was inappropriate to the situation as the other group defined it. These areas of misunderstanding might be conceptually broken down into two interrelated groups, rules and meanings:

Rules:

The Russians and the Aleuts operated under different rules or systems of etiquette for correct and desirable behavior. For instance, the Russians did not know the Aleut rules of proper behavior when visiting in a strange place, and so the Aleuts, not receiving recognizable cues from their visitors, were unsure of the Russians' intentions. The Russians were also unaware that their muskets should have been given to the Aleuts as gifts if they were to behave as proper visiting dignitaries.

Meanings:

This second area of misunderstanding is even more amply illustrated in the booklets. To begin with, the two groups could not understand each other's languages. Neither did they know the meanings attached to the various gifts that were exchanged. The Aleuts had an idea that the needles were utilitarian, since they had similar implements themselves. But they mistakenly

thought that the muskets had a ceremonial significance like their dance staffs. The Russians in turn did not know why cormorant skins were given to them (neither do we by reading the books, though it may be postulated that they symbolized an offering of a valuable animal, one from which parkas were made; it might also have had spiritual significance), and were unaware of the importance of the salmon stream to the Aleuts. These points of misunderstanding should be brought out in discussions to follow the reading of the booklets.

It is interesting that in some instances the groups understood each other's actions very well, and these areas of understanding should be brought up in class discussions as well. For instance, both groups immediately engaged in gift exchange, an apparently appropriate activity for both when meeting strangers. Both groups were prepared for war, though neither wanted to precipitate it. The needles given by the Russians were correctly identified, as was the fish hook picked up by the Russian on the banks of the salmon stream. Given the great differences in background of the two sets of people, these similarities in custom might be considered more remarkable than would the differences.

The following activities suggest ways in which you might explore the concepts of different rules and meanings with your class:

1. Rules

   (a) Determine some of the rules (proper

etiquette) by which you have been taught to live, and discuss what your reaction would be if someone broke one of those rules, either purposely or inadvertently. Some situations for which rules can be identified are:

(1) classroom behavior

(2) party behavior

(3) behavior at mealtime

(4) behavior in church or temple

(5) behavior at a school basketball game

Discuss what would happen if someone displayed church etiquette at a basketball game; or some other combination of correct behavior, but in the wrong setting.

(b) The above exercise assumes that a person is displaying appropriate behavior, but in the wrong setting. Next discuss what happens when an individual is simply ignorant of the proper behavior, yet those around him expect him to abide by the rules. Students could write about or dramatize an experience of this nature that they have personally witnessed, or about one of the following:

(1) Two teams play basketball against each other. The problem arises because one team is made up of boys who play boys' rules, while the other is composed of girls

who are playing according to girls' rules.

(2) A member of one religious group attends the service of another, not knowing proper behavior.

(3) A child attends public school for the first time.

(4) A new boy in town goes out on a fishing boat and is expected to know what to do to help with the catch.

(5) Any other experience which would be meaningful in your community.

(c) Discuss the function which rules of etiquette play in the students' lives. What are the advantages and disadvantages of having such widely understood rules?

2. Meanings:

Words are not the only things which have meanings. Actions and objects also have meanings, and unless we know the meanings that actions and objects hold for the person we are dealing with, we may act inappropriately and cause a misunderstanding.

(a) As an introductory activity to the concept of meaning, ask the class to identify objects in the classroom which they think would have no meaning or a different meaning to a person from another culture.

Discuss other examples of different meanings applied to the same object or situation; some examples follow:

(b) What an 8 pound halibut might mean to a commercial and a sport fisherman.

(c) What an acre of land might mean to a farmer and a city dweller.

(d) What long hair might mean to an adult and a teenager.

(e) What a gun might mean to a hunter and a resident of Seattle.

If you have not already done so, extend the discussion to cover areas in which the Aleuts and Russians disagreed on the meanings of objects and actions.

VALUES AND GOALS

The final and ultimately the most damaging cause of the unfortunate events in Agattu was the difference in values and goals held by the Russians and Aleuts. The Russians saw the Aleuts only in terms of their own immediate task, that of obtaining many furs rapidly. They did not view the Aleuts on the islanders' own terms, and they valued money more than friendship with the Aleuts. Concomitantly, the Aleuts' goals of survival and defense were contrary to the Russians' interests.

You might introduce the concepts of values and goals in the class by engaging in one of the strategies listed in *Values Clarification* by Sidney B. Simon, Leland W. Howe, and Howard Kirschenbaum. Then engage in some role-playing, dividing the class into Aleuts and Russians. Provide each group with a short written statement indicating its goals and thoughts on the meeting between the two groups. The groups should meet separately to discuss and clarify their feelings. They should use the information they obtained in reading *Strangers* in addition to the statments you provide for them in formulating their philosophies.

The physical set-up of the room should approximate that of the actual situation: Aleuts should sit or stand on one side of the room, Russians on the other. A spokesman from each group should speak in turn, addressing both his own group and the opposite group, delineating his group's

concerns. Members of the other group may ask questions of the spokesman, though the questions must remain within the theoretical framework of the asker's group. In addition, you should ask questions of the spokesmen in order to underline specific issues where there is a disagreement. For instance, if the Russian spokesman states that he wants to obtain sea otter skins, make sure he addresses the problem of how the Aleuts fit into his picture of hunting, and further what the Russian will do if the Aleuts are unwilling to help or allow the hunting.

The activity can end when the values of both groups have been brought out. Follow it with a discussion reiterating the disagreements, and considering whether or not there could have been a peaceful solution to the meeting between the two groups, given the two differnt stances presented in the activity.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

1. At the end of the Russian account of *Strangers*, the narrator states "I, for one, plan to return to the American islands again next year." Have one of the students research Nevodchikov's voyage. What happened to his ship as it returned to Siberia? Did the trappers make a big profit in Russia?

2. Bancroft's *History of Alaska 1730-1885* reports a Native tradition which tells of early sightings of Europeans. A Koniag story telling of Glottof's 1763 sojourn on Kodiak Island was related by Arsenti Aminak to the Finnish naturalist Henrik Holmberg in 1850 or 1851 and it is reproduced in Bancroft's book (Bancroft 144-147). Though the Koniags are linguistically Eskimo rather than Aleut, the situation is similar enough to occurrences in the Aleutians to make the story appropriate for this unit.

You might want to read this account to the students, and assign to some of the more inquisitive students a comparison of Aminak's account with the Russian account as portrayed by Bancroft.

3. If you live in the Aleutian or Pribilof Islands, have the students ask some of their elder relatives about legends of the coming of the first white men to the Aleutians. Invite one of the elders to school to tell the legends to your class. Compare the legends with *Strangers*.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

"AS THE EUROPEANS SAW THEM"

Book II, "As The Europeans Saw Them", is composed of direct quotations by some of the earliest Europeans to come into contact with the Aleuts. Its primary usefulness to your class will probably be as a resource book which students can refer to for information about early Aleut practices, or for answers to specific questions you or they may have about ancient Aleut life. You might give students a little background on each of the Europeans quoted in the book. The following synopses provide some information:

Waxel and Steller

Although Vitus Bering is given official credit for having "discovered" Alaska in 1741 (i.e., being the first European to sight the mainland), there is evidence that a ship bearing the navigator Michael Gvozdev had sailed along the shore of the Seward Peninsula for five days in 1732. (Bancroft 37-41). Gvozdev did not write a report of that voyage for several years, however, and by the time it did appear, reports of Bering's Second voyage had already overshadowed it.

Thus the two ships of Bering's expedition, the St. Peter (under the command of Bering) and the St. Paul (under Alexei Chirikov's command), were not the first European vessels to enter Alaska's waters. They were, however, the first to sail under imperial orders to

explore the land east of Siberia and the first to produce scientific reports and descriptions of what had been seen.

The particulars of Bering's voyage are well known; refer particularly to F.A. Golder's *Bering's Voyage*, Waxel's *The Russian Expedition to America*, Bancroft's *History of Alaska 1730-1885*, and Miller and Miller's *Lost Heritage of Alaska*. Of interest for this social studies unit are the portions of Bering's and Chirikov's journeys during which their ships sailed within the territory of the Aleut-speaking peoples.

The St. Peter sailed into sight of the Shumagin Islands on August 29, 1741. The Russians met and attempted to communicate with the Aleut inhabitants of those islands during the following week, out of which meetings came the descriptions by both Waxel (the ship's First Lieutenant) and Steller (the naturalist aboard the St. Peter) reproduced in *"As The Europeans Saw Them."* The St. Peter then sailed west along the chain, sighting islands and people periodically. The ship was eventually shipwrecked on Bering Island (in the Commander group) where Vitus Bering died. The survivors spent the winter on the island, and after building a makeshift boat sailed toward the Kamchatka Peninsula, arriving at the port of Petropavlovsk on August 17, 1742.

Meanwhile Chirikov's St. Paul, after becoming separated from its sister ship, had also sighted some of the Aleutian Islands and Aleut people, but both of her small boats had already been lost in Southeastern Alaska during

an unsuccessful attempt to obtain fresh water. Thus Chirikov was not able to land on any of the islands although he did describe a group of Aleuts who paddled out to the St. Paul from the shore of Adak Island. (See Golder, pp. 303-305.)

Tolstykh

The quotation is taken from Andrei Tolstykh's diary which detailed the first voyage to the Aleutians that was under the protection of an imperial Ukase. Tolstykh was the commander of the ship Andreian & Natalia, which was in Alaskan waters between August, 1761 and September, 1764. Tolstykh was apparently well received by the Aleuts and in fact persuaded the inhabitants of six islands to become subjects of Russia and to pay tribute in furs. (Bancroft pp. 127-130). The report thus describes the Aleuts of the Andreanof Islands at a time when the fur trade between the Aleutians and Russia was already underway. (Coxe, pp. 77-78).

Krenitzin and Levashev

Petr Kumich Krenitzin, designated as the commander with Mikhail Levashev as his second in command, departed from St. Petersburg in July, 1764 on an imperial mission to obtain scientific information about the Aleutian Islands and their inhabitants. After many mishaps, the two men finally sailed from Siberia in June, 1768, their original expedition of four ships by then cut down to two. Both ships spent the winter of 1768-69 in the

Aleutians, Krenitzin on Unimak Island and Levashev on Unalaska Island. The winter was a hard one, for neither the weather nor the Aleuts welcomed the Russians. Both ships returned to Russia in the spring of 1769. (Bancroft pp. 159-167). The quotation in "*As The Europeans Saw Them*" is an extract from the journal of the unfortunate scientific expedition. (Coxe, pp. 256-7, 259, 261-3).

Cook

Captain James Cook, the British explorer, spent 23 days of his third (and last) voyage in English Bay (called Samghanooda Bay by Cook) on the northern coast of Unalaska Island during October, 1778. At that time, the Aleuts were already acculturated to Russian manners and economic ethic. The subsistence patterns were apparently still much the same as those during pre-contact days, however, and so some of Cook's descriptions are valuable. The excerpt in "*As The Europeans Saw Them*" is from Cook's journal of the voyage.

Sarychev

Gavril Sarychev was a member of the Billings expedition, called the Geographical and Astronomical Expedition to the Northeast Parts of Russia 1785-1791, under order of Empress Catherine and under command of Joseph Billings. Sarychev was the commander of one of the ships, the Slava Rossii.

The two ships in the expedition spent the winter of 1791-92 in Unalaska Bay at the present site of the town of

Unalaska, though Sarychev himself traveled around the island in a bidarki. As representatives of the Russian government, the officers of the ships collected the fur tribute from the Aleuts, and also had occasion to learn of the maltreatment the Aleuts had received from many of the promyshleniki.

The account reprinted in "*As The Europeans Saw Them*" is from Sarychev's journal of his trip around the island, during which he visited several Aleut villages. He described the Aleuts as they appeared after more than four decades of subjugation to the Russians; oral tradition proclaims "before the arrival of the Russians there were ten times as many people as when Sarychev landed on Unalaska Island in 1792." (Martinson 91). In spite of the great changes that had been wrought in the Aleutians by that time, the Sarychev journal is unique, since as a member of a scientific expedition he was careful to observe aspects of the Natives' lives which previous explorers and traders had ignored or overlooked. (Bancroft 293-295).

Veniaminov

Father Ivan Veniaminov was a Russian Orthodox priest assigned to the Unalaska District from 1823 to 1834. While there, he learned the Aleut language and developed a writing system for the language. He also traveled to many of the islands, learning some of the old customs from the people as he traveled.

The quotation in "*As The Europeans Saw Them*" is taken from a translation of his *Zapiski* or *Notes on the Islands of the Unalaska District* which he wrote after leaving Unalaska. Veniaminov's information is based on what he was told by the Aleuts. Many of the customs they described to him were no longer practiced in the 1800's, but were remembrances of earlier times. The information is thus not a first-hand description, as are the other selections in the booklet. It is important, however, in that it deals with more of the "mental" culture and the social system, both elements of Aleut life which the earlier Europeans had not recorded. Veniaminov's *Zapiski* is thus the first truly authropological work on the Aleuts - and the only one which concerns the culture of our target group, the Aleuts of the eighteenth century.

The only notable biases Veniaminov exhibited can be attributed to his religious role on the islands - he was concerned with converting and "enlightening" the Aleuts. Although he was not, for the most part, judgmental about the Aleuts' former, non-Christian beliefs, he nonetheless makes it clear that he values the beliefs of the post-contact era far more.

USING THE BOOK

1. To introduce students to "*As The Europeans Saw Them*," you might want to assign a few specific topics for research. For instance:

   a. Did the Aleuts use iron before the coming of the Russians?

   b. Collect and compare descriptions of Aleut houses, or barabaras.

   c. Find out more about the role of the uncle in bringing up a child. (Reference is made to a boy's uncle in Part I of *Strangers: The Aleut Side*).

   d. What did Aleuts do for fun and relaxation?

   e. Why did Aleuts go to war, and against whom?

   f. How did the Aleuts choose a new chief when an old one died?

   g. Why do you think the Russians were able to conquer the Aleuts?

2. Have students draw pictures of an Aleut settlement and its inhabitants, based on the information provided in the quotations.

3. Set up a file of information on eighteenth century Aleuts. Students can organize the file according to topic. For instance, data on clothing can be in one section; on houses in another; fishing and hunting techniques in another; and so forth.

4. Have students search the quotations for examples of attitudes which might have biased the writers in their descriptions. Have them decide on which sorts of information the Europeans can be trusted in their descriptions.

LIMITATIONS OF EUROPEAN DESCRIPTIONS

Discuss some of the limitations in the European descriptions. For instance:

1. Some types of information were not collected, either through lack of interest on the part of the Europeans, the esoteric nature of the information (theological questions, for instance), or the Aleuts' hesitancy to talk about private matters (child-bearing procedures, for instance). Ask students how they might find the type of information that Russian accounts lack. Have them consider the Aleuts' side of the issue by asking, "are there parts of your lives you would not want to divulge to outsiders?"

2. Russian accounts tend to show the Russians as the active participants of any encounter, and the Aleuts as passive recipients of the Russians' actions. Refer students to the Russian account of *"Strangers"* for an example of how incomplete the Russian story alone seems when compared with the entire account of both Russian and Aleut informants. Have students write imaginary Aleut accounts of the Russians' behaviors to correspond with the six accounts re-printed in *"As The Europeans Saw Them."*

3. Russians may have misinterpreted some of the things they saw in Aleut culture. They, like the Aleuts in "*Strangers*" who thought the muskets were dance staffs similar to those they were familiar with, might have defined Aleut objects incorrectly.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD OBSERVER?

Discuss: What attributes make a good observer? Have students conduct an experiment to determine how good they are at observing behavior which is unfamiliar to them. Assign to each student the task of reporting on some unfamiliar scene; for instance, a church service with which they are not familiar; a sporting event for which they do not know the rules; an adult cocktail party; a meeting which is carried out in a language not their own; etc. Students should write down their observations and their interpretations of what the actions meant. Then they should ask the participants of the event under observation to explain what happened. Students then compare their own interpretations with those of the participants.

Discuss the experience in class. Decide how the various observations might have been improved. Relate the discussion to the Russian-Aleut observations in *"As The Europeans Saw Them."*

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

If you or your students are interested in digging more deeply into the backgrounds of the early European visitors to Alaska, this might be the time to do so. Some topics for research by good students who want to go deeper follow. Students might be interested in choosing a topic, writing a "paper" or doing a series of drawings and combining several of these topics in an original booklet or dramatization.

1. What were the Russian antecedents of yasak, the tribute the Aleuts paid to the Russians?

2. What were the prevailing Russian attitudes toward physical punishment?

3. What were prevailing Russian attitudes about, and legal rights of serfs? How might these facts have affected the Russian treatment of the Aleuts?

4. What was entailed in carrying out a furring expedition to the Aleutians from Russia in the eighteenth century?

5. Find out about the Kamchadals, Chukchees, and Koriaks, all Natives of Siberia. Might the Russians' previous dealings with these Natives have conditioned their dealings with the Aleuts?

6. Many of the early accounts make informative and enjoyable reading which you or your students might want to look into. Examples: Ledyard's *A Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage*; particularly pages 91-101; many portions of Coxe's *Account of the Russian Discoveries between Asia and America*; and portions of Sarychev's *Account of a Voyage of Discovery to the North-East of Siberia, the Frozen Ocean and the North-East Sea*, particularly pages 59-68.

LESSON II:

GEOGRAPHY & ENVIRONMENT

LESSON II: THE GEOGRAPHICAL METHOD AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION: MAKUSHIN BAY, UNALASKA ISLAND

OBJECTIVES:

To illustrate the generalization, "The choice people make in determining a living site is related to the food, water, and shelter potentialities of that site."

To provide students with information from which they can determine how the pre-contact Aleuts made their choices for living sites.

To illustrate the geographical method and its application in a study of Aleut culture.

To stimulate students to consider the relationship between the potentialities their home area provides and the way they are utilizing those potentialities.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES:

Students should be able to list the specific resources available to pre-contact Aleuts.

Students should begin to determine how the pre-contact Aleuts used those resources.

Students should relate the general principle of resource utilization to their own lives.

Students should expand their picture of pre-contact Aleut culture.

MATERIALS PROVIDED AS PART OF THE UNIT:

Map of Faunal Resources of Makushin Bay, Unalaska Island

Book III, *Floral Resources In Makushin Bay*

MATERIALS YOU SHOULD HAVE ON HAND:

Map of the Aleutian Islands or Alaska

Books on the flora and fauna of the Aleutian Islands

RESOURCE LIST OF RELATED MATERIALS:

Books:

Hulten, Eric, *Flora of Alaska*, Stanford Univeristy Press, Stanford, California; 1968.

Kirk, Donald R., *Wild Edible Plants of the Western United States*, Naturegraph Publishers, Healdsburg, California; 1970.

Martinson, Charles, *Aleut Settlements of the Makushin Bay Area, Alaska;* University Microfilms; Ann Arbor; 1973.

Oliver, Ethel Ross, *Aleutian Boy;* Binfords & Mort; Portland; 1959. (This is an adventure story set in the 1950's. It shows two boys struggling to survive on the resources available to them to Amlia Island, near Atka, after they have been cast ashore in a storm.)

Sarychev, Gravrila S., *Account of a Voyage of Discovery to the North-East of Siberia, the Frozen Ocean and the North-East Sea*, DeCapo Press; New York; 1969.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The second part of the unit on Aleut culture and history centers around a resource map and accompanying booklet for one area in the Aleutians, Makushin Bay, Unalaska Island. This lesson is designed to inform students of the natural resources utilized by the Aleuts, thus providing a more detailed picture of pre-contact Aleut life than did the European accounts in *As The Europeans Saw Them.*

Makushin Bay, on the northwestern part of Unalaska Island, was the home of a large group of Aleuts until World War II. It has not been inhabited regularly by Aleuts since the War, when the people were relocated to Southeastern Alaska (later to be returned to other parts of Unalaska Island), but there is evidence of the many years of past habitation. The map is based on this evidence, as compiled by a geographer, Charles Martinson. His studies of the area and its resources were so complete that they provide excellent background for student inquiry.

The map shows locations of the major natural resources of the area (fauna, shelter, water, transportation corridors), as well as the sites which were, in pre-contact days, inhabited by the Aleuts. Book III, *Floral Resources in Makushin Bay,* supplements the map with information on plant resources of the area. Activities for using the map and booklet center around the identification of the

resources and the relationship various resources had with the lives of the people.

A study of this sort can yield information about the following areas of pre-contact Aleut life:

1. Subsistence patterns: What did the Aleuts use for food? How did they obtain food? How were yearly activities affected by the quest for food?

2. Settlement patterns: Why did the Aleuts choose the marked sites as settlements? What variables can be singled out to explain their choices? What resources were the seasonal sites designed to exploit?

Another topic for which information is not specifically provided by the map, but for which the map provides a valuable background is:

3. Social system: How many people lived in each settlement? How were they related to each other? Were some of the resources owned by individuals and groups, and if so, by whom? How was labor divided so that the resources could be most effectively utilized?

Students should realize that in tackling these questions they, like anthropologists and historians, must supplement the facts as they are presented with theories and conjectures about the relationships between resources and the people who utilized them. Suggestions to help them in their inquiries follow.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

INTRODUCTION TO
FAUNAL RESOURCES OF MAKUSHIN BAY and FLORAL RESOURCES IN MAKUSHIN BAY

Generalization:

The choice people make in determining a living site is related to the food, water, and shelter potentialities of that site.

1. Students will now be searching for information about pre-contact Aleut life through a different perspective, that of geography. Explain to them that their task during this lesson is to determine the relationship between the Aleuts' environment or local geography and the Aleuts' lives. One way to point out that such relationships exist in the students' own lives, as in the lives of the eighteenth century Aleuts, might be to discuss the questions:

> When you go camping, how do you choose your campsite?
>
> Why is your village (city, town) located where it is?
>
> Discuss the concepts "environment" and "resources".

2. Next, students should become explicitly aware of the geography and weather of the area under study, the Aleutian Islands. Have them study a map of the Chain, noting the obvious physical characteristics.

3. If possible, invite a meteorologist to class to discuss why the Aleutians experience so much overcast and

stormy weather; or, have individual students research and report on this.

SITE BY SITE ANALYSIS

1. Next, concentrate on the map of Makushin Bay itself. Note that various living and camping sites have been marked on the map, as have the natural resources. Have students begin organizing the information provided on the map. For instance, they could begin by listing the natural resources available at each separate site. Divide the class into groups and assign a specific site to each group for identification of resources at that location.

2. With a knowledge of what the resources are, students can begin a process of rating each site for its desirability as a living site. Have students determine what would make a location desirable to the Aleuts. The following variables should be brought out in the process of discussion:

ease of bidarki landing and launching
availability of fish
availability of sea mammals
availability of birds and eggs
availability of land animals
availability of marine invertebrates
abailability of fresh water
availability of driftwood
availability of beached whales

Students will need to do some interpretation of the map in order to determine the availability of some of the above resources. For instance, driftwood and whales are likely to show up on a shore that faces prevailing winds and predominant currents rather than one protected from them.

3. Discuss: What seem to have been the most important resources in terms of the location of a winter village? What resources seem to have been sacrificed most often in favor of other, more important resources?

4. Discuss: What resources seem to have been most important in locating a seasonal site? Why?

FLORAL RESOURCES IN MAKUSHIN BAY

1. The plants noted in *Floral Resources in Makushin Bay* have not been located on the map, since all of them have a fairly wide distribution and are not associated with any one site.

Go over the plants in the booklet and compare the uses noted therein with the way you and your students use those plants today.

2. Look up the plants in a botanical reference (eg., Hulten's *Flora of Alaska* or *Wild Edible Plants of the Western United States*) to determine the geographic distribution of each. Discuss: What other Native groups might have used these plants in a similar fashion? What possible uses could the plants have been put to besides those which the Aleuts practiced?

3. Discuss the relative importance of plants vs. animals in the Aleuts' diets.

4. Consider: Who do you think harvested most of the plant food? the beach food (sea urchins, chitons, clams, etc.)? the sea mammals? the fish? Why?

5. Take a field trip outdoors and collect samples of these plants (many of which grow outside of the Aleutians as well). Press the samples you have collected and make a display for your school's display cabinet.

COMPARING EIGHTEENTH CENTURY MAKUSHIN BAY WITH OTHER AREAS

1. Do a comparative study of the natural resources available in eighteenth century Makushin Bay and one or more of the following:

   a. a present-day Aleutian village
   b. your own town today
   c. your own town in the eighteenth century

Students will have to first define the resources available in a, b, or c above. Then discuss reasons for any differences they find between the chosen area and eighteenth century Makushin Bay. Discuss how these differences might affect the life styles of the people living in the respective areas.

2. An additional set of resources beyond the natural resources considered above are man-made resources. Discuss, for instance, how electrical generators, canneries, airports, and buildings have affected the natural environment and the people living in the environment.

To illustrate the differences between man-made and natural resources, students could make two maps of their own area, one depicting the purely natural environment, the other depicting the environment as it stands with all man-made resources depicted. Have students identify the resources which their village utilizes today, as compared with those utilized by the eighteenth century Aleuts.

3. In many areas on the Aleutian Chain, the natural environment is largely unchanged from the days of the pre-contact Aleuts, with the exception of a decrease in the numbers of furbearing animals such as the sea otter. Yet people living on the islands have a very different lifestyle today from that of the eighteenth century Aleuts. Discuss reasons for this change. If you live in the Aleutians, invite an elder to your classroom to describe the environment when he or she was young.

4. Consider the question: Are we adapted to our environment (including both natural and man-made resources), as the Aleuts were in Makushin Bay in pre-contact days? If so, in what ways are we adapted to our environment?

5. Discuss: Would our town's location have been chosen as a village spot by the eighteenth century Aleuts (if you live on the seashore)? Why or why not?

LESSON III:

ARCHAEOLOGY

LESSON III: ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHOD AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION:

A CENTRAL ALEUTIAN SITE

OBJECTIVES:

To provide specific information on the subsistence and social aspects of eighteenth century Aleut life.

To illustrate the types of information which can be obtained from a study of archaeological information.

To illustrate some relationships between historical, geographical, and archaeological information.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES:

Students should improve mapreading skills including understandings of symbols, scale, and cross-sections.

Students should learn specific facts, including what eighteenth century Aleut implements looked like, were made of, and were used for.

Students should be able to relate what has been read in previous lessons with information which is before them at present.

Students should conduct group research projects and be able to make generalizations about eighteenth century Aleut life based on those projects.

MATERIALS PROVIDED AS PART OF THE UNIT:

Map of Aleut House Pit

Book IV *Handbook for Central Aleutian Site*

Book II, "*As the Europeans Saw Them*"

MATERIALS YOU SHOULD HAVE ON HAND:

Any Aleut artifacts available to you

Modern implements which might be used as comparison with pre-contact Aleut implements

Books from the school library on Aleutian geography or natural history

RESOURCE LIST OF RELATED MATERIALS

Book and Journal Articles:

The main archaeologists who have worked in the Aleutians to date are Waldemar Jochelson, Aleš Hrdlička, Jean Aigner, William Laughlin, Allen McCartney, Christy and Jacqueline Turner. Check specific issues of *Anthropological Papers of the University of Alaska* and *Arctic Anthropology* for articles by these people.

Of specific interest for this Lesson are the following:

Aigner, Jean S., "*Activity Zonation Within a 4000 Year-Old Aleut House from Chaluka Village, Umnak Island, Alaska*" (in press), University of Connecticut.

Cook, John, *Archaeological Report: Site 49-Rat 32, Amchitka Island, Alaska (HN-20-1045)*, May 1972. Atomic Energy Commission.

Weyer, Edward Moffat Jr., "*An Aleutian Burial*" *in Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History*, Vol XXXI, Part III 1929.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A large map of an Aleut house pit and an accompanying handbook describing the artifacts and faunal remains found in the pit and its immediate area are the bases for the third Lesson of this social studies unit. The site is a composite of several actual archaeological digs: the house pit portrayed in the map was discovered on Amchitka Island; the artifacts were found in a variety of sites in the central Aleutians, all dating at shortly before the time of contact with the Russians.

This lesson is designed to give students the opportunity to draw several types of conclusions about pre-contact Aleut life. For instance, from information provided about the implements in the handbook, students can learn something about:

1. the importance of various activities in the lives of the Aleuts as suggested by the numbers of tools associated with each activity found in the house pit.

2. relationships with groups outside the immediate territory, particularly where an item found in the house pit is made of some material not locally available or where an item is indicative of wars or trade.

3. the relative importance of various food resources to the eighteenth-century Aleuts, as indicated by the faunal remains, the type of hunting tools, and the

material from which tools are made.

From information provided by the relationships between those artifacts within the house pit itself, the following types of generalizations might be made:

1. division of labor in Aleut life
2. living patterns within a house

The evidence in the map and the handbook themselves thus provide much information, but to be completely effective, they must be used in conjunction with the historical, anthropological, and geographical evidence already explored by the students. "*As the Europeans Saw Them*" contains many passages about the houses of the Aleuts, (including a lithograph of an Aleut house made in the 18th century) as well as the subsistence patterns of the people. The Map of Makushin Bay also provides a total environmental context for Aleut life, of which only a small part, one particular house site, is represented in the present Lesson. Specific suggestions for dealing with the house map and handbook follow.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

MAP OF ALEUT HOUSE PIT AND HANDBOOK FOR CENTRAL ALEUTIAN SITE

Generalization:

Many inferences about the non-material aspects of a people's life can be based on material evidence alone; but the most valid inferences are those which make use of material evidence in conjunction with other sorts of evidence.

INTRODUCING THE MATERIAL

1. Allow students time to examine the *Map of Aleut House Pit* and become familiar with the symbols it contains. They should refer to the section of the Handbook entitled "*About the House*" for information on the method and materials used in building this house. See also Webber's lithographs in "*As the Europeans Saw Them*".

Help students to visualize the excavation, both in cross-section and surface view. You might mark the actual dimensions of the house on the floor of the cafeteria or other large room in your school with masking tape. Note that all measurements are given in meters; if your students are not familiar with the metric system, this might provide an opportunity to introduce it to them.

Discuss the size and shape of this house in relation to your students' own houses. Have students speculate on the following:

How may people lived in the house?

Why was it dug partially below ground level?

What are the advantages to building a house partially underground?

2. A group of students could build a model of the house, either as it appeared when it was inhabited or when the archaeologists discovered it.

3. Students should familiarize themselves with the *"Handbook for Central Aleutian Site"* and the types of information it provides. Refer them specifically to the section of the Handbook entitled *"About This Handbook"*.

EXAMINING AND INTERPRETING THE EVIDENCE

1. Talk about what students believe can be learned about eighteenth century Aleut life from the Map and Handbook. Examples of information the archaeological evidence provides are:

   a. Information about how the Aleuts fed, clothed, and sheltered themselves (subsistence activities).

   b. Information about how various tools were made and what they were made of.

   c. Information about how the Aleuts spent their leisure time.

   d. Information about what relationships the Aleuts had with people on other islands or in other cultural groups (trade and warfare).

   e. Information about the division of labor (along age, sex, status, or ability lines).

   f. Which natural resources were most utilized by the Aleuts.

   g. What the living arrangements were within the house (who and how many people lived there, whether there was a woman's area and a man's area, etc.).

2. Seven general areas are listed above. If students have thought of any others, add those to the list. Then divide the class into as many groups as there are items on the list, and have each group research one area. (The first area, subsistence activities, is the topic about which there is most information. You might therefore want to subdivide that area among several groups of students, assigning separate groups to food, clothing, and shelter, for instance.)

Suggestions for the way a group might go about its research follow:

Task: Determine the types of food the Aleuts ate and which foods were eaten most often.

Solution: a. Check the *Handbook*, *"Faunal Remains"* section, to find out which animal bones or shells were found in association with the site.

b. Check the *"Artifacts"* section to find items associated with food gathering: bird hunting, for instance. Some of the implements which indicate that the Aleuts engaged in bird hunting are bone points used as part of a bird spear and bola weights.

c. Count the number of artifacts made of bird bones, even if all of those artifacts were not themselves involved in obtaining the birds.

d. Students will now have an idea of the importance of birds in the Aleuts' economy. They should now consider the problem: can we determine how the soft parts of the birds (meat and skins) were used by reference to the hard parts (bones)?

Another group might have to do research beyond what is provided in the *Handbook* and the *Map of Aleut House Pit*. For instance:

Task: Determine the Aleuts' relationships with outside groups of people.

Solution: a. Check "*Artifacts*" section of the *Handbook* to determine what materials were used in making the artifacts.

b. Do outside research to discover if any of the materials are not indigenous to the Aleutians. (For instance, walrus, from which most ivory is obtained, do not live in the central Aleutians and are rarely seen even in the eastern islands.)

c. Determine where such materials did come from, and hypothesize how the Aleuts might have obtained them.

d. Check "*Artifacts*" section of the *Handbook* for objects which were designed for use with outsiders (weapons of war, for instance).

3. As part of their research, students should refer to "*As the Europeans Saw Them*" to compare the archaeological evidence with the historical evidence. If European accounts provided corroboration for certain practices which the archaeological evidence indicates (warfare, for instance), students should note this in their group reports.

4. When each group is satisfied that it has thoroughly researched its topic, bring the groups together for reports. Have them compare conclusions. If a group feels that there was not enough information contained in the *Map and Handbook* to successfully deal with its particular topic, discuss how more information might be obtained and why it did not show up in the archaeological record.

5. If a topic file was begun when reading "*As the Europeans Saw Them*", students could now add archaeological evidence to that file.

6. Introduce two new variables which might help to explain some of the discrepancies in the record: regional differences and individual variation. Point out, for instance, the possibility that the western Aleuts might have lived in slightly different types of houses than the eastern Aleuts; or that a very large cohesive family group might have chosen to live in one large house, whereas a new young family with no living grandparents might have lived in a small house built for only the parents and

children. Emphasize that the Central Aleutian Site is only one site, and that students should not assume, on the basis of that one site, that all others would be identical. Refer students to other site reports, listed above in the Resource List of Related Materials for this lesson.

7. The *Map of Aleut House Pit* portrays a permanent winter house. Discuss how a fishing camp site might differ from this one. Have students imagine and construct a fish camp site report, complete with house pit, faunal remains and artifacts. Some students might want to construct a model of the site.

8. Discuss the topic: How did the Aleuts use their tools and implements to alter the natural environment?

9. Compare the artifacts used by eighteenth century Aleuts with the objects used to perform the same tasks today. If you have access to actual artifacts, you might want to make an exhibit in your school library of old and new tools, concentrating on the similarity or difference in form and material used. Discuss the difference in the manufacturing processes involved in making the two groups of tools. Invite a local elder who knows about some of the old-time implements to talk to your class. Or, if possible, visit a museum to see some of the old Aleut tools.

10. Discuss the limitations of the archaeological method. Consider not only the parts of Aleut life which are not clearly shown by archaeological evidence, such as religion, language, or beliefs, but also the parts of material culture which are not revealed (the "soft parts": basketry, skins, cartilaginous fish bones, etc.).

LESSON IV:

FOLKLORE

LESSON IV: FOLKLORE AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION

OBJECTIVES: To show how folklore can give an indication of people's values and beliefs

To provide examples of several types of Aleut folklore

To point out some of the aspects of life and environment which the Aleuts considered important

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES: Students should contrast oral with written formats as ways of transmitting traditions

Students should learn what is entailed in translating oral traditions by "reworking" an English literal translation into modern acceptable English

Students should learn how three types of Aleut folklore (song, legend, folk tale) functioned in the life of Aleuts

Students should learn some common themes in Aleut folklore, and from those common themes make a statement about the values they point out

Students should compare Aleut folklore with the folklore of their own cultural group (if it is not Aleut)

Students should relate, in discussion, essay, or other activity, the information about Aleut life as obtained through folklore with information from other sources they have referred to throughout the unit

MATERIALS PROVIDED AS PART OF THE UNIT:

Book V: *Selections from Aleut Folklore*

Folklore Handbook for Bilingual Classrooms

Book VI: *Atkan Historical Traditions* by Cedor L. Snigaroff

MATERIALS YOU SHOULD HAVE ON HAND:

Tape recorder
Copy of Anfesia Shapsnikoff's recording of "A Sparrow Story"

RESOURCE LIST OF RELATED MATERIALS:

Books and periodicals:

Bergsland, Knut, "*Aleut Dialects of Atka and Attu*" in *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, Volume 49, Part 3, 1959.

Dauenhauer, Richard, *Riddle and Poetry Handbook*, Alaska Native Education Board, Anchorage, 1976.

Golder, F. A., "Aleutian Stories", *Journal of American Folklore*, Volume 18, 1905.

Golder, F. A., "Eskimo and Aleut Stories from Alaska", *Journal of American Folklore*, Volume 22, 1909.

Golder, F. A., "The Songs and Stories of the Aleuts, With Translations from Veniaminov", *Journal of American Folklore*, Volume 20, 1907.

Jochelson, Waldemar, *History, Ethnology, and Anthropology of the Aleut*, Carnegie Institute of Washington Publication No. 432, 1933.

Jochelson, Waldemar, unpublished transcripts of stories in Aleut and English. The Alaska Native Language Center in Fairbanks (University of Alaska) has a copy of the manuscript.

Veniaminov, Ivan Evseievich Popov, *Notes on the Athin Aleuts and the Koloshi*, St. Petersburg 1840 (Reproduced in the Human Relations Area Files, New Haven, Connecticut).

Veniaminov, Evan Evseievich Popov, *Notes on the Islands of the Unalaska District*, St. Petersburg 1840 (Reproduced in the Human Relations Area Files, New Haven, Connecticut).

Audiocassettes:

Tapes #251, 255, 256, and 257 of the *Alaska Library Network Cassette Catalog 2* contain stories, legends, and customs as told by Anfesia Shapsnikoff. Tape #255 contains "A Sparrow Story" in Aleut and English. Copies of tapes are available through the Alaska State Library in Juneau, the Fairbanks North Star Borough Library, 901 First Avenue, and the Anchorage Higher Education Consortium Library, 3211 Providence Drive, 99504. They can either be borrowed or you can have a copy made for your school by sending a cassette to the library.

A final source of information about Aleut life, one which comes closest to revealing the feelings and beliefs the people held about themselves and their environment, is their folklore. Four selections from the currently published body of Aleut folklore have been reproduced for use with this unit to allow students to sample this source.

There are many types of folklore; refer to Dauenhauer's *"Folklore Handbook for Bilingual Classrooms"* Part II (provided as part of this Unit) for a listing of some of them. It would, of course, be impossible to reproduce more than a small fraction of the Aleut legends, myths, songs, and stories here, but the one legend, two folk tales and one song that appear in *"Selections from Aleut Folklore"* serve to indicate some of the concerns of Aleut culture.

Before discussing the content of these pieces, it would be appropriate to review something about their form. The most important difference between the form these selections take and that of the stories your students may be used to reading relates to the fact that these stories were originally composed orally, not in writing. Aleut, like other Alaskan Native languages, was not written until the coming of the Europeans to Alaska. Thus the stories, legends, and traditions which were told in those languages were passed on by word of mouth and the art of dramatic

storytelling was highly developed. Equally developed was the capacity to remember long and complex sequences of events without the aid of written reminders -- both skills which are not well-developed in the modern literary cultures. Refer to the Folklore Handbook, Part III for more specific information on how the oral traditions differ in form from written traditions. (Unfortunately, in order to allow for a wide dissemination of the stories, we have had to write them, thus altering them from the original.) For strongest impact, the selections in Booklet V should be read or told to the students, or read or told by some students to the rest of the class. (One of the stories, *"A Sparrow Story"*, is available on a tape cassette recording made by Anfesia Shapsnikoff. Refer to the Resource List of Related Materials section at the beginning of this Lesson for information on where to obtain a copy.)

Another point to remember about these selections is that they are all, with the exception of *"A Sparrow Story"*, translations from the Aleut. Thus the original rhythms of the Aleut versions have been lost, as have the fine meanings of some of the terms for which there is no exact English translation, and a number of literary devices which don't translate easily (alliteration, puns, etc.). Students might be able to get some idea of the gap between the original and the English by referring to the Aleut, literal English translation, and reworked English translation versions of *"A Song of the Atkan Aleuts"* included in

"Selections from Aleut Folkore".

Finally, it is important to remember that these stories did not exist in a vacuum; each performed a function in the life of the Aleuts and was an integral part of that life. Thus, for instance, the two folk tales, *"A Sparrow Story"*,and *"There Once Lived a Man"*, were "morality stories", told to instruct adolescents and adults in proper behavior by showing them the consequences of improper behavior as well as to entertain them. *"There Once Lived a Man"* may recount an actual occurrence, one which was very dramatic in showing the consequences of unacceptable behavior. *"A Song of the Athan Aleuts"*, on the other hand, was sung and danced, probably at a winter feast as entertainment for guests from other villages. And the legend of Chuning actually details the history of the Attu people, and was an important part of their knowledge of themselves, something which every Attu child heard over and over again before he or she reached adulthood. This story was probably also told at the beginning of winter festivals to non-Attu guests, as a sort of introduction and identification of the Attuans.

The content of each of the selections can now be considered. The stories may, at first listening, seem overly violent to Western ears made sensitive to violence in the media -- particularly for children's stories. They are violent -- but the violence is put into its proper

context when it is realized that Aleut children were not shielded from parts of their culture as modern American children are; rather, they were exposed to all parts of life, with the knowledge that they would have to deal with many different situations in the future and should thus be prepared for them. In keeping with the practice of exposing children to all aspects of life, no distinction was made between an adult and a juvenile story; the tales in *Selections from Aleut Folklore* are thus not children's stories. And, while violence was accepted as a part of life, it was not considered a desirable part of it, as close reading of the stories indicates. Both *"A Sparrow Story"* and *"There Once Lived a Man"* show violence as being a natural but destructive reaction, for it destroys the person who perpetrates it in the end. Violence in these stories is integral but not central.

You will find below a list of some of the ways in which each relates to the beliefs and values of traditional Aleut life. It is important in reviewing these beliefs and values to avoid making judgments about them in terms of your or your students' own values. The point is to learn about eighteenth century Aleut culture, not to judge it.

A. *"A Sparrow Story"* (Folk tale):

Animals have powers beyond the normal every-day world as we see it, and should be treated with respect

The theme of a lone woman who has lured a good

husband away from his wife

The vanquishing of an enemy by outwitting her

The dire consequences of being unfaithful to a spouse

The dire consequence that extreme anger can cause (the wife "died from worrying and thinking of her husband."), coupled with very strong feelings for loved ones.

B. *"There Once Lived a Man"* (Folk tale):

The power and prestige a chief of a village can have

The theme of the unfaithful wife, lured by greater prestige than her own husband can provide

The theme of the vindictive mother-in-law who rushes to tell on her daughter-in-law, knowing that the consequences will be grave

The regret that a person feels if he has listened to his anger or jealousy and performed a rash deed ("Thinking that he had been too jealous, he began to cry.")

C. *"Chuning, the Ancestress of the Attuans"* (Legend):

Warfare and competition between Aleuts from different islands

Ingenuity in the face of misfortune

The strength and ability of a woman alone to survive

Continued good humor in the face of misfortune

Humor in telling the story ("Oh! I'm going to see a man at last!")

Polygamy (Chuning lived with more than one husband)

The theme that things were more pure and true in the past than they are today ("from then on the language of the Attu people has been different.")

D. "*A Song of the Atkan Aleuts*" (Song):

Hunting is a normal task, one which every man engages in from time to time as needed

Individuality and freedom to do as one wants, as expressed by the man's going out alone without telling anyone he's going

Modesty, not bragging about his prior or intended success at hunting

Good humor in the face of failure

Open expression of emotions ("If there'd been one with whom to cry I would have felt like crying.")

Dependence on spirit helpers

Drums, singing, and dancing as pleasurable, and perhaps necessary (for the success of the hunt) pastimes

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

"Selections from Aleut Folklore" and "Atkan Historical Traditions"

Generalizations

Aleut stories have many similarities in both format and content with Western folktales, histories, and songs; but their background is in oral, rather than written tradition, and this difference is important in fully understanding them.

Much can be learned about a people's values from a content analysis of their oral traditions.

ORAL VS. WRITTEN COMPOSITIONS

Have students read aloud, perform, or listen to the stories, as seems appropriate with your class. Discuss some of the differences between an oral composition and a written composition, perhaps by contrasting them according to the following criteria:

1. length of time one has in which to compose a story

2. what happens if a listener/reader does not understand the story the first time through

3. what happens in the retelling/rereading of the story

4. what devices can be used other than words to describe the action and mood of the story (e.g., facial expression, tone of voice, whispers, pauses, length of sentences, etc.)

5. degree of interaction between composer and audience

Students should compare their own oral compositions with written compositions to increase their understanding of the differences in the following manner:

Have a student write a short story or essay. Then, have her or him relate it in front of a group of students and into a tape recorder if one is available without

looking at the written composition. Other students transcribe the student's oral composition word for word. Compare the transcriptions with the student's original written composition. Do this with only one student or with the whole class, depending on student interest.

Then discuss some of the aspects of the student's oral presentation which could not be transcribed. (see "4" above) How did this alter the way the composition appeared in the transcriptions? Relate this to the Aleut stories, considering, for instance, how a reader can tell when the story was meant to be told with humor, drama, satire, etc.

THE FOLK TALES: CONTENT ANALYSIS

1. Discuss the folk tales ("*A Sparrow Story*" and "*There Once Lived a Man*"): their main themes, what they indicate about Aleut life, and what lessons students think they were supposed to teach the Aleuts who heard them.

2. Ask students to recall stories they were told as youngsters which instructed them on proper modes of behavior (one example of an Anglo morality story is "The Boy Who Cried Wolf"). Compare these stories with the two folk tales in "*Selections from Aleut Folklore.*"

3. Obtain a copy of "*A Sparrow Story*" on tape from one of the source libraries listed above under Resource List of Related Materials and play it for the class. You might play portions of the Aleut version of the story (which occurs on the same tape), even for students who do not speak Aleut, so that they can hear the language.

4. There are many stories similar to "*A Sparrow Story*" in both Aleut and Eskimo tradition. A few sources are listed below. If you can obtain them, students might be interested in comparing the various versions.

(See Golder, F. A., "Eskimo and Aleut Stories From Alaska", *Journal of American Folklore* Volume 22, 1909, stories #1, 3, 4, and 5.)

THE CHUNING LEGEND: CONTENT ANALYSIS

1. Discuss the story of Chuning: its themes and the attitudes it reveals. Compare this story with some of the oral traditions which abound in American folklore (George Washington chopping down the cherry tree, for instance), or with the legends of the students' own cultural group.

2. See Golder, F. A., "Aleutian Stories", *Journal of American Folklore* Volume 18, 1905, story #I for another version of the Chuning story.

A SONG OF THE ATKAN ALEUTS: ANALYSIS

1. Read "*A Song of the Atkan Aleuts*". Have students act it out, sing it, or dance it. Discuss the function this song held in Aleut life (see preceding pages).

2. The following poem was composed by Philip Booth, a young American who was also involved in a task which "was something anyone could do. Nothing special". Compare this man's reaction to his task with the Aleut's reaction to the sea lion hunt.

EGO

The poem was removed by ERIC.

(Used by permission of The Viking Press, Inc. Copyright © 1956 by Philip Booth.)

3. Refer to Richard Dauenhauer's *"Riddle and Poetry Handbook"*, Alaska Native Education Board, 1976, for details on poetry, song, oral and written literature, and the use of Alaska Native oral traditions as models for teaching poetry and creative writing in schools.

4. Have students write songs or poems of their own, based on an experience when they failed to do something they set out to do. Compare their feelings upon failing with those of the Atkan Aleut author of the song.

TRANSLATIONS: LEARNING SOME OF THE DIFFICULTIES

An activity which can serve to illustrate the difficulties in translating from one language to another follows:

Have students write reworked versions of "*A Song of the Atkan Aleuts*" based on the original Aleut and Bergsland's literal English translation which appear after Dauenhauer's working of the song in "*Selections from Aleut Folklore*". For contrast, you might read the following version to them, which is one originally collected by Father Veniaminov, the Russian Orthodox priest who was stationed at Unalaska between 1823 and 1834:

A Song of the Atkan Aleuts

Veniaminov's Version

(This song is sung by a person who is preparing to dance.)

As it is done by the timid that I might do likewise, I hid and departed.
And when I rode, gazing about, I saw the beast the sea lion, that he adroitly dives and comes up;
Stopping opposite him, I began to think:
Even for the timid one it seems possible to do with him one's will;
And thinking, that in my undertakings even I have had success, I took from the stern of my baidarka a javelin, stripped the sheath (from the point) and placed (the javelin) before me.
I rode and drawing near to him, I shot at him, but did not place the javelin in him.
He became enraged and dived,
I rode after him and shot at him, but could do nothing with him, but only spoiled the points on my javelins.
Although I had gone off with this (object) only, that I might not see anyone;
Yet I looked about, that I might see someone, and did not see (anyone).
And if there had been anyone with whom to weep, I would have so (wept), in such a condition was I.
Having stopped there, I rode home; having arrived, when I landed on the shore,

I turned my ears to hear that which I loved, and considered myself a master in, (I listened for) the voice of the tambourine and did not hear (it).
Yes! As I thought, so it is, for here you are.
And so take your tambourine and sing.

(Here the dancer ceases to sing and those sitting around begin to beat on the tambourines and to sing while he dances and represents the hunter.)

HOW DOES FOLKLORE FIT IN?

1. Ask students to relate any values or beliefs these selections uncover with the practices of the Aleuts as revealed by previous types of information (historical, geographical, etc.) studied in this Unit. Some students might be interested in illustrating the stories authentically, using the information at hand to be sure the detail on bidarkis, barabaras, clothing, etc., is proper.

2. Have students search the compositions in "*Selections from Aleut Folklore*" for examples of statements or practices which are uniquely Aleut (e.g., bidarkis, seal meat); then have them search the selections for examples of statements or practices which are nearly universal (e.g., warfare, inability to perform an expected task, etc.). Talk about how the unique and the universal aspects of the stories might help students to better understand themselves and their own culture.

3. Invite an Aleut elder to your class to tell other Aleut stories or songs. Discuss these stories or songs in terms of content, style, and values they indicate.

4. As a final exercise, one which can be used to integrate the various concepts and skills developed through this unit, read Cedor L. Snigaroff's *Atkan Historical Traditions* and discuss it from the several perspectives your class has dealt with: the historical, the

environmental/ecological, and the literary methods. You could divide the class into groups, each dealing with the text using one of the above disciplines, each responsible for reporting (in written or oral form) its findings to the rest of the class.

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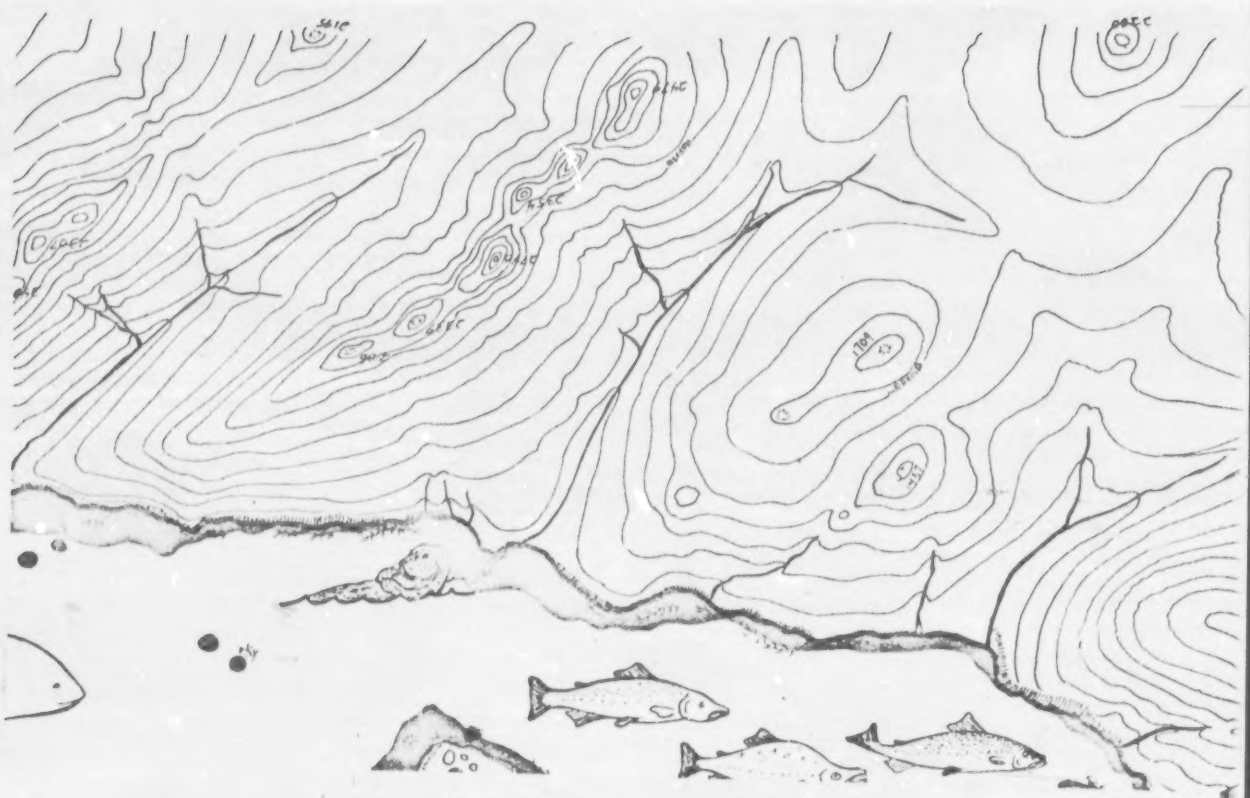

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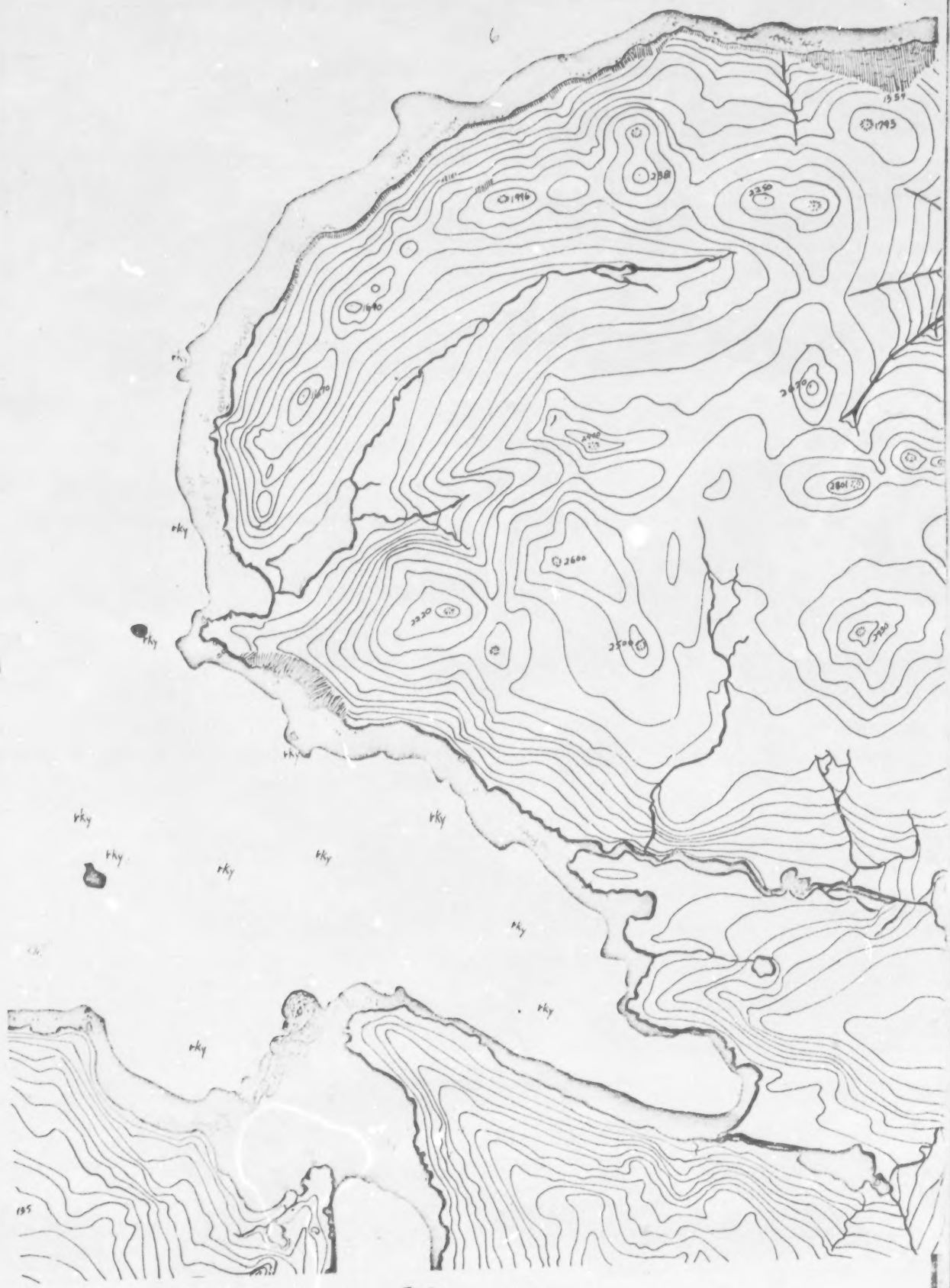
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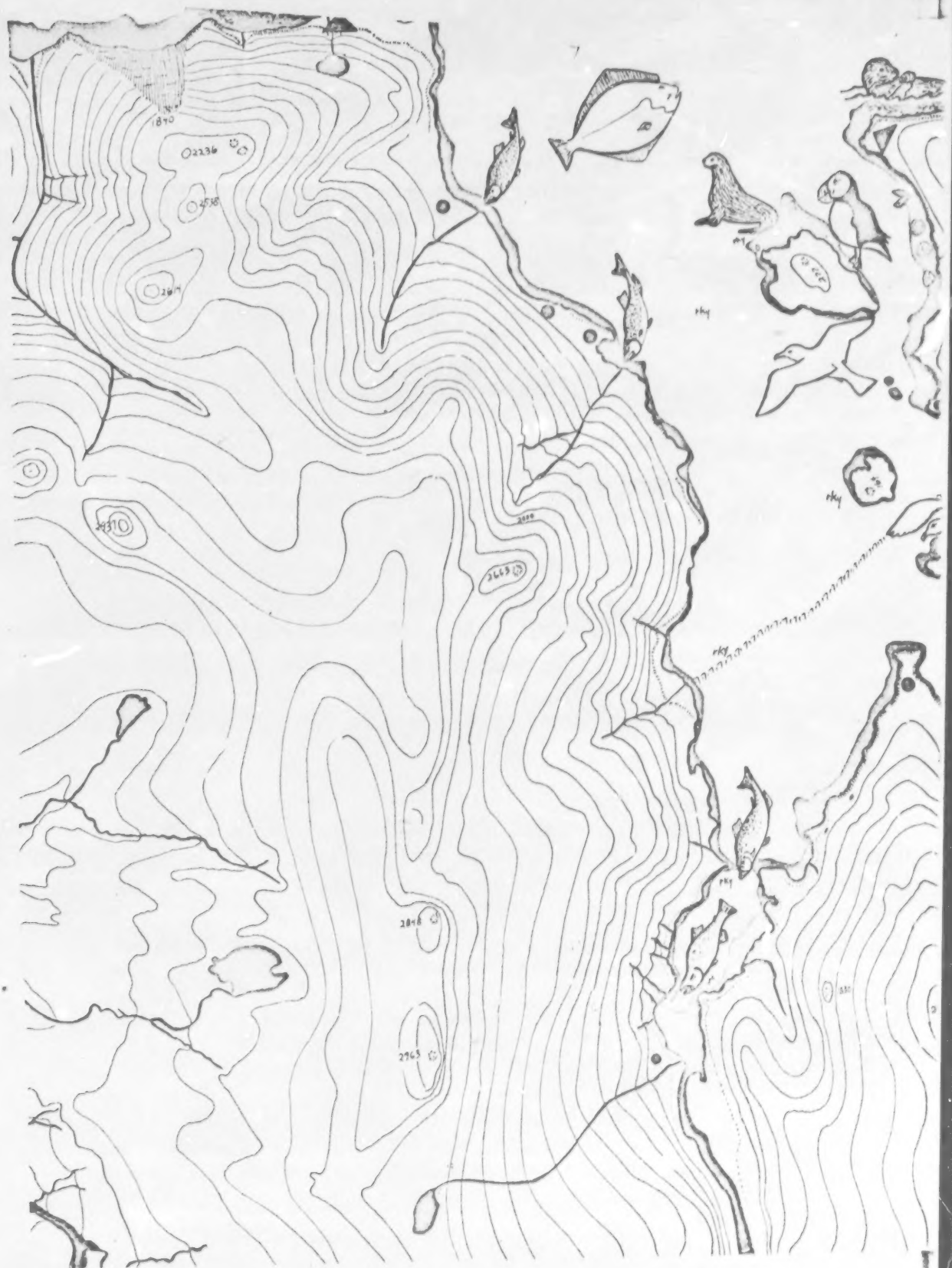
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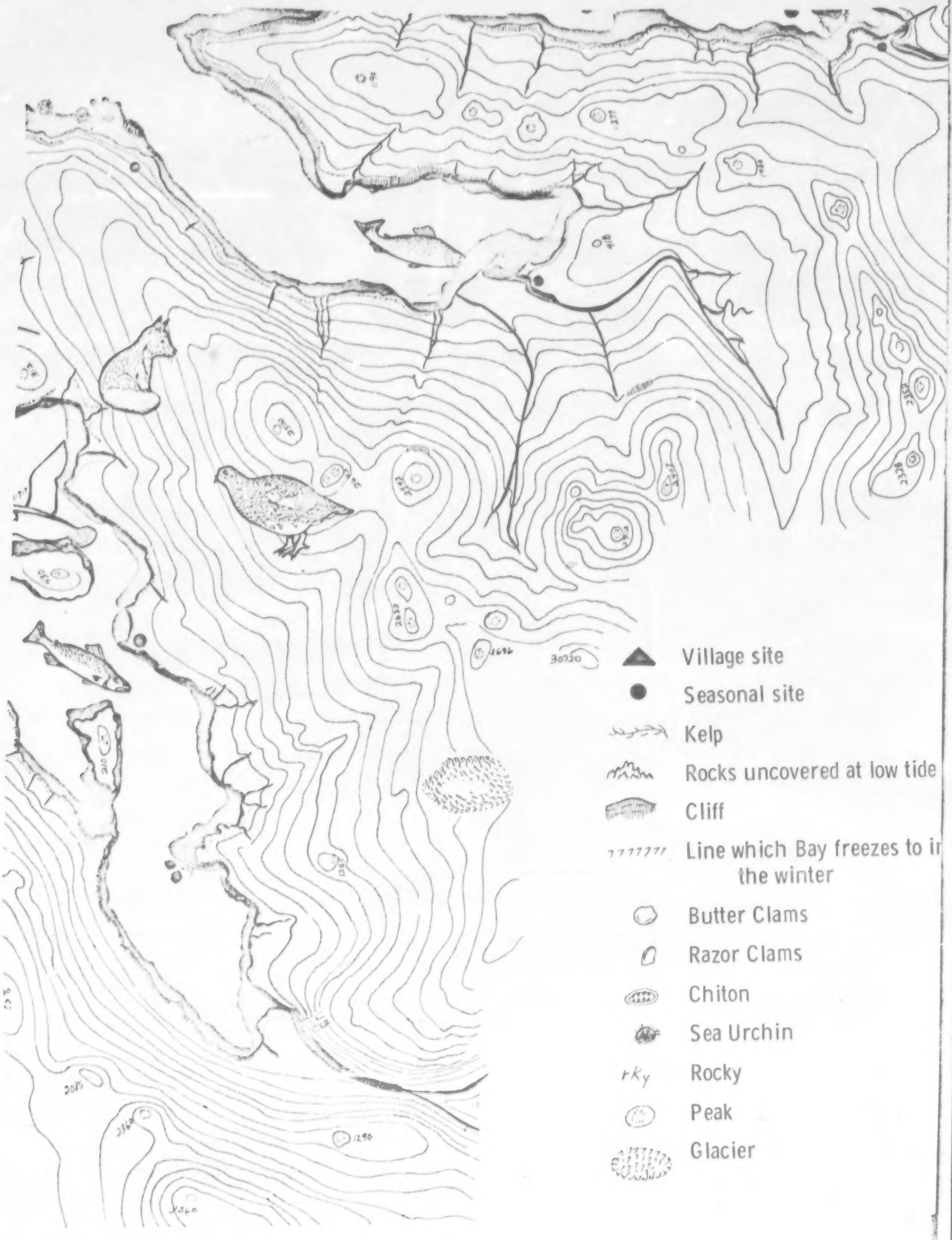
Village site
Seasonal site
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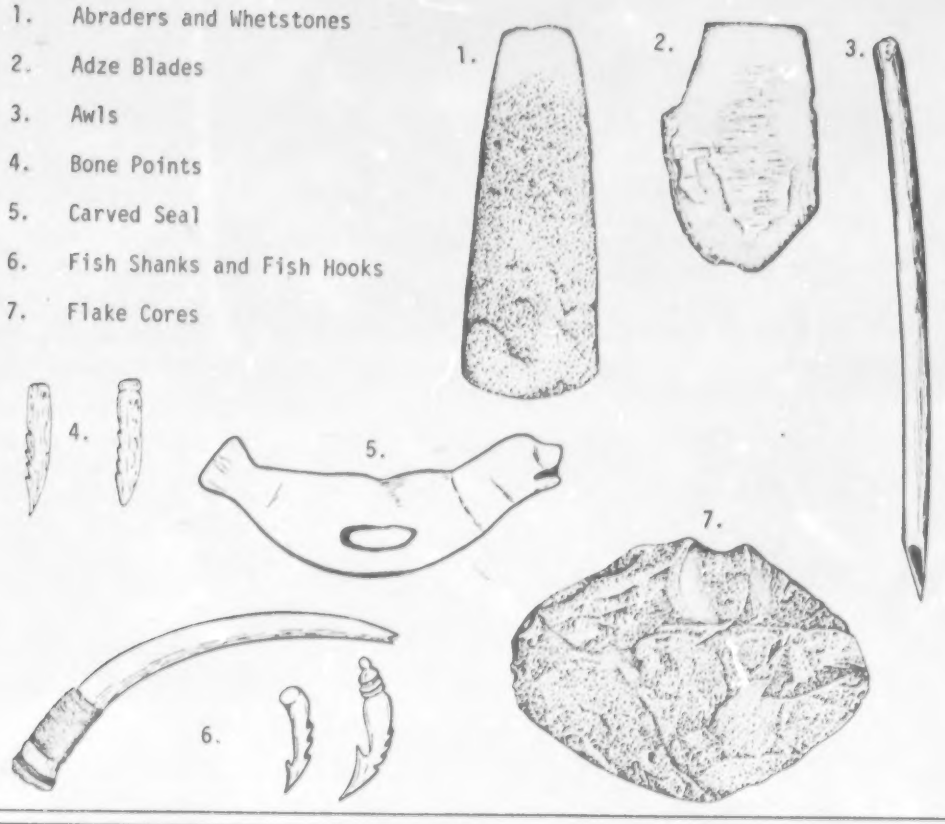
Rocks uncovered at low tide
Cliff
Line which Bay freezes to i
the winter
Butter Clams
Razor Clams
Chiton
Sea Urchin
Rocky
Peak
Glacier

ALEUT HOUSE PIT MAP

1. Abraders and Whetstones
2. Adze Blades
3. Awls
4. Bone Points
5. Carved Seal
6. Fish Shanks and Fish Hooks
7. Flake Cores



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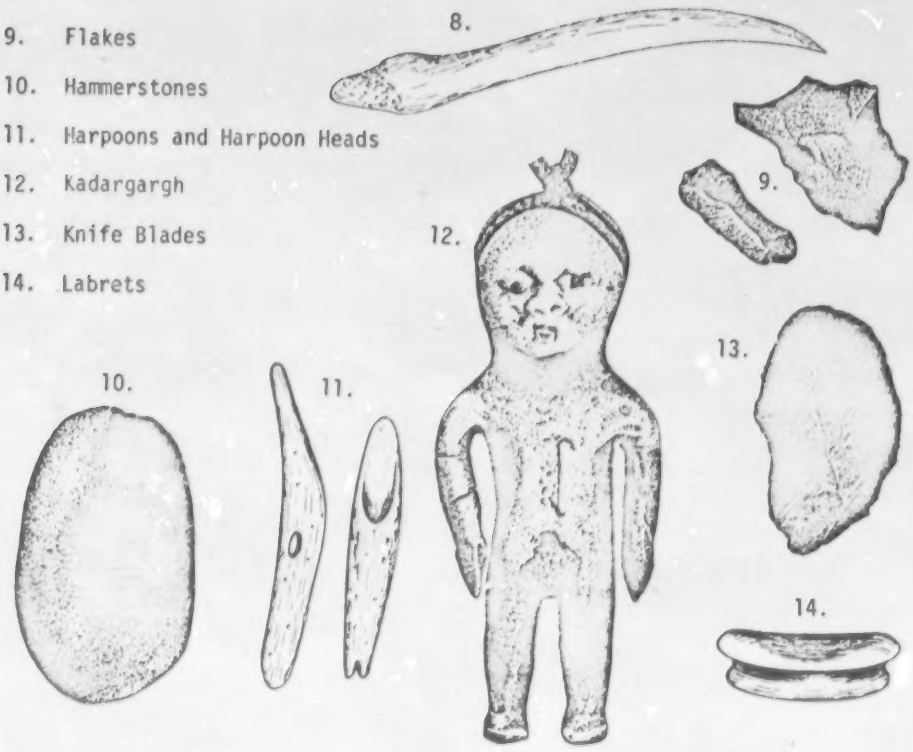
Aleut Hou

8. Flaker
9. Flakes
10. Hammerstones
11. Harpoons and Harpoon Heads
12. Kadargargh
13. Knife Blades
14. Labrets



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ie Pit Map

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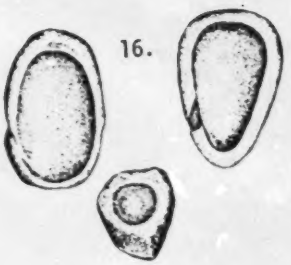
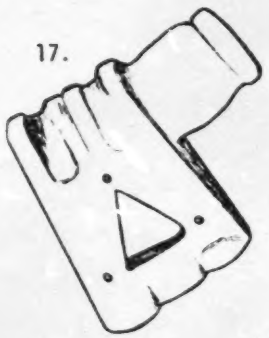
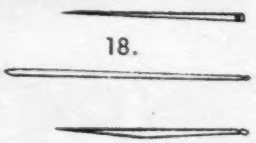
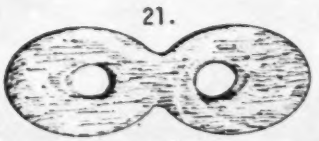
15. Ladle
16. Lamps
17. Mouthpiece or plug
18. Needles
19. Paint Grinder
20. Pebbles
21. Qusi'dax'









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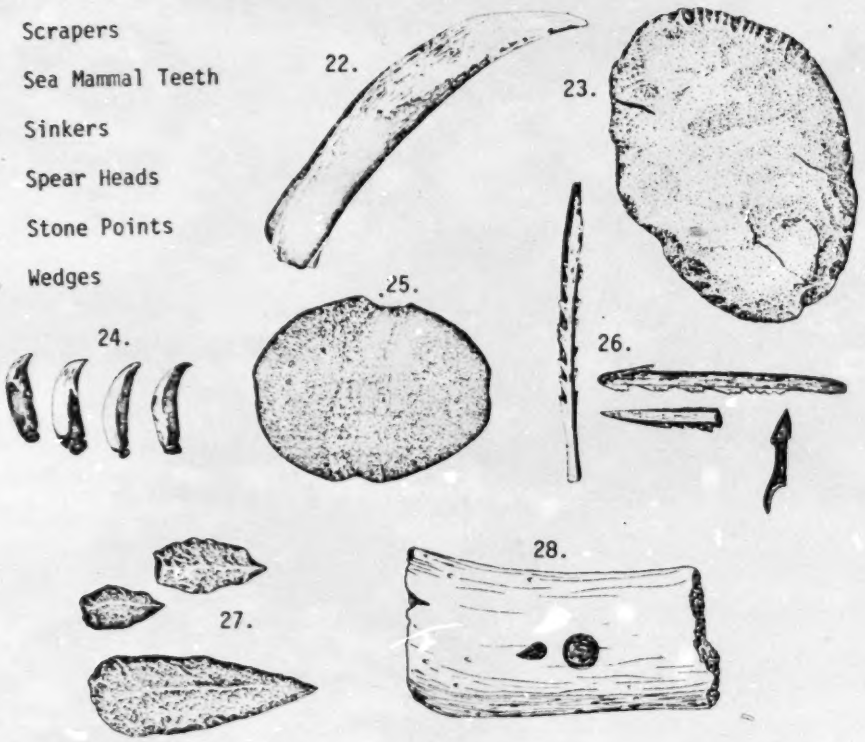
22. Root Diggers, Reamers, Prying Tools
23. Scrapers
24. Sea Mammal Teeth
25. Sinkers
26. Spear Heads
27. Stone Points
28. Wedges



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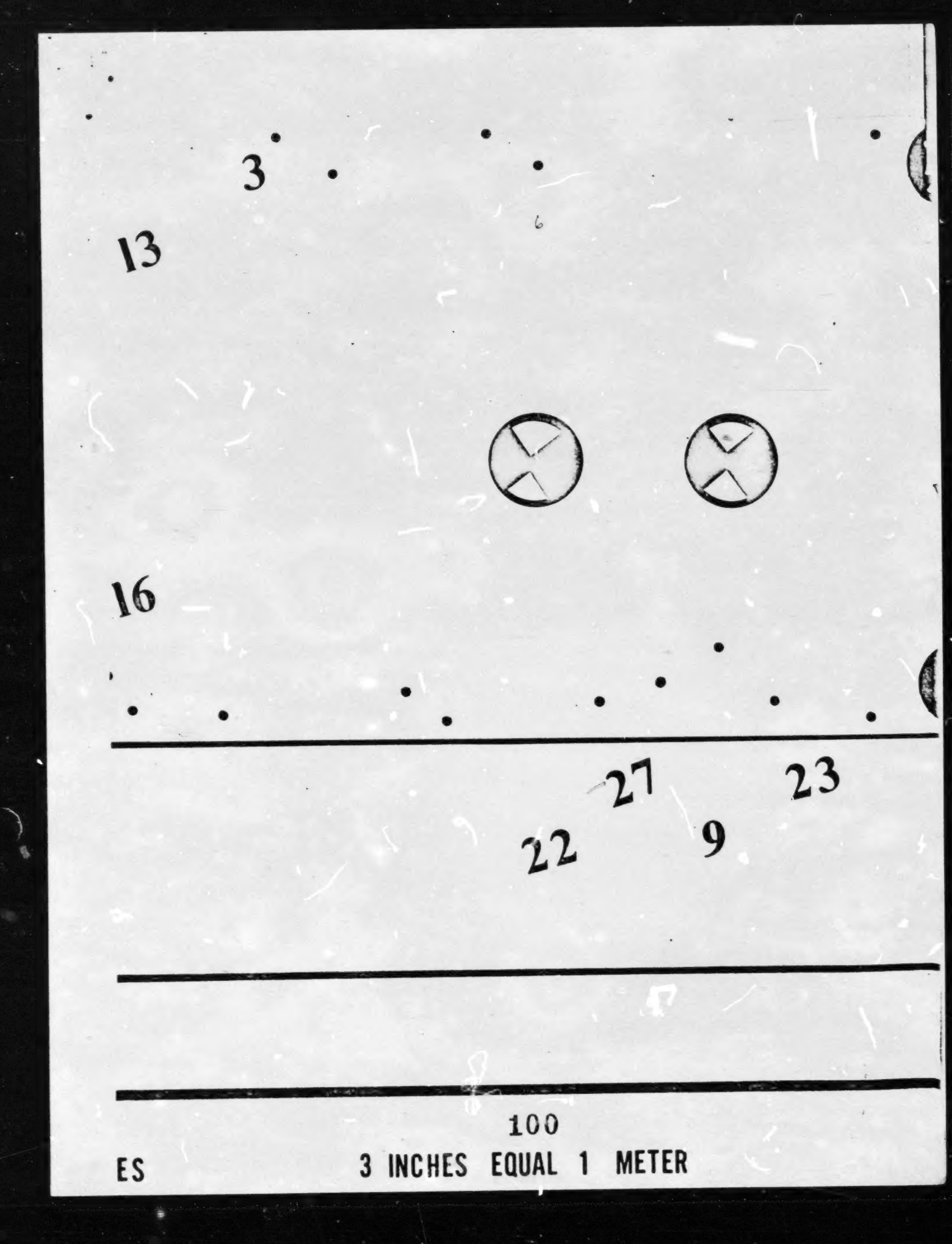
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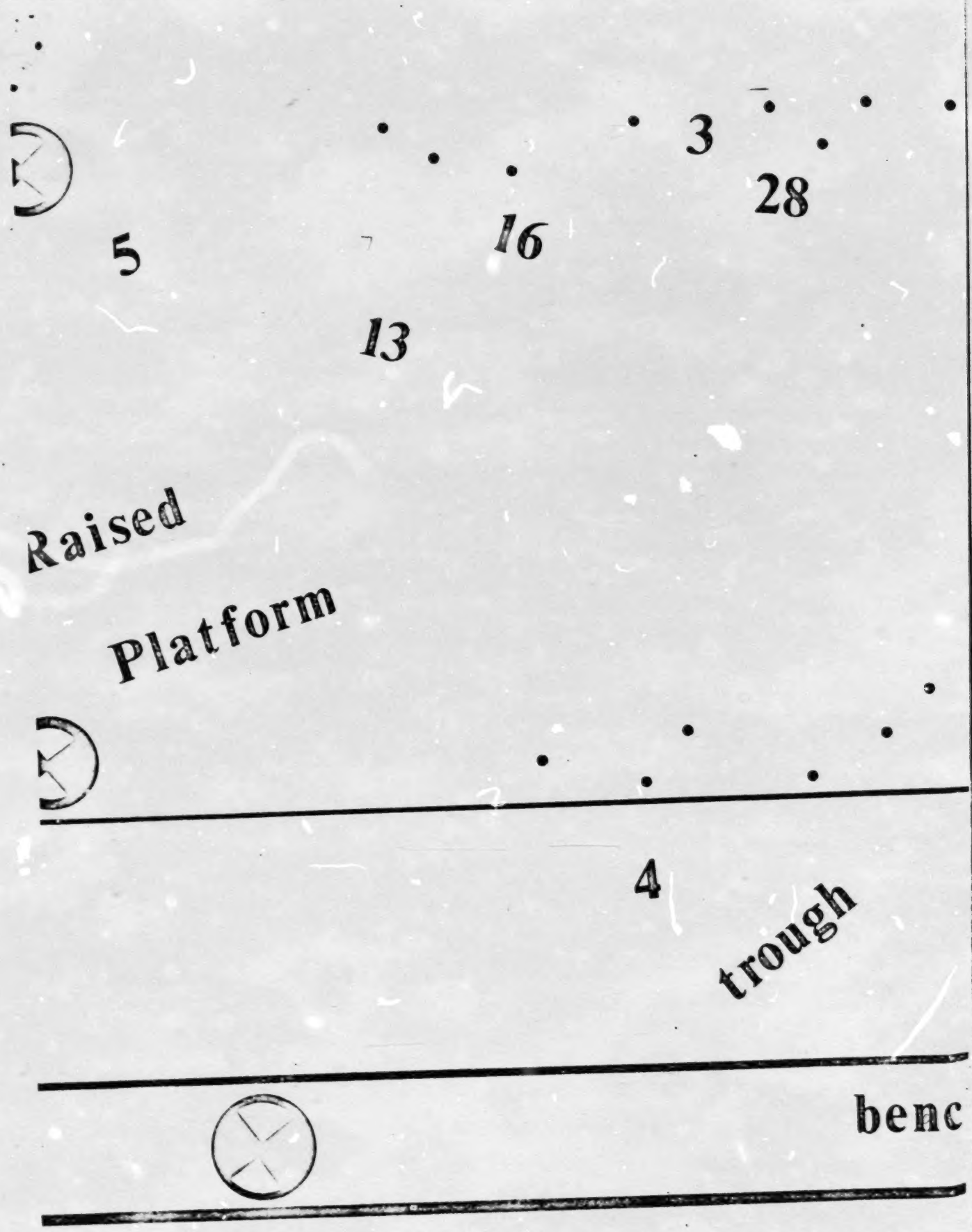
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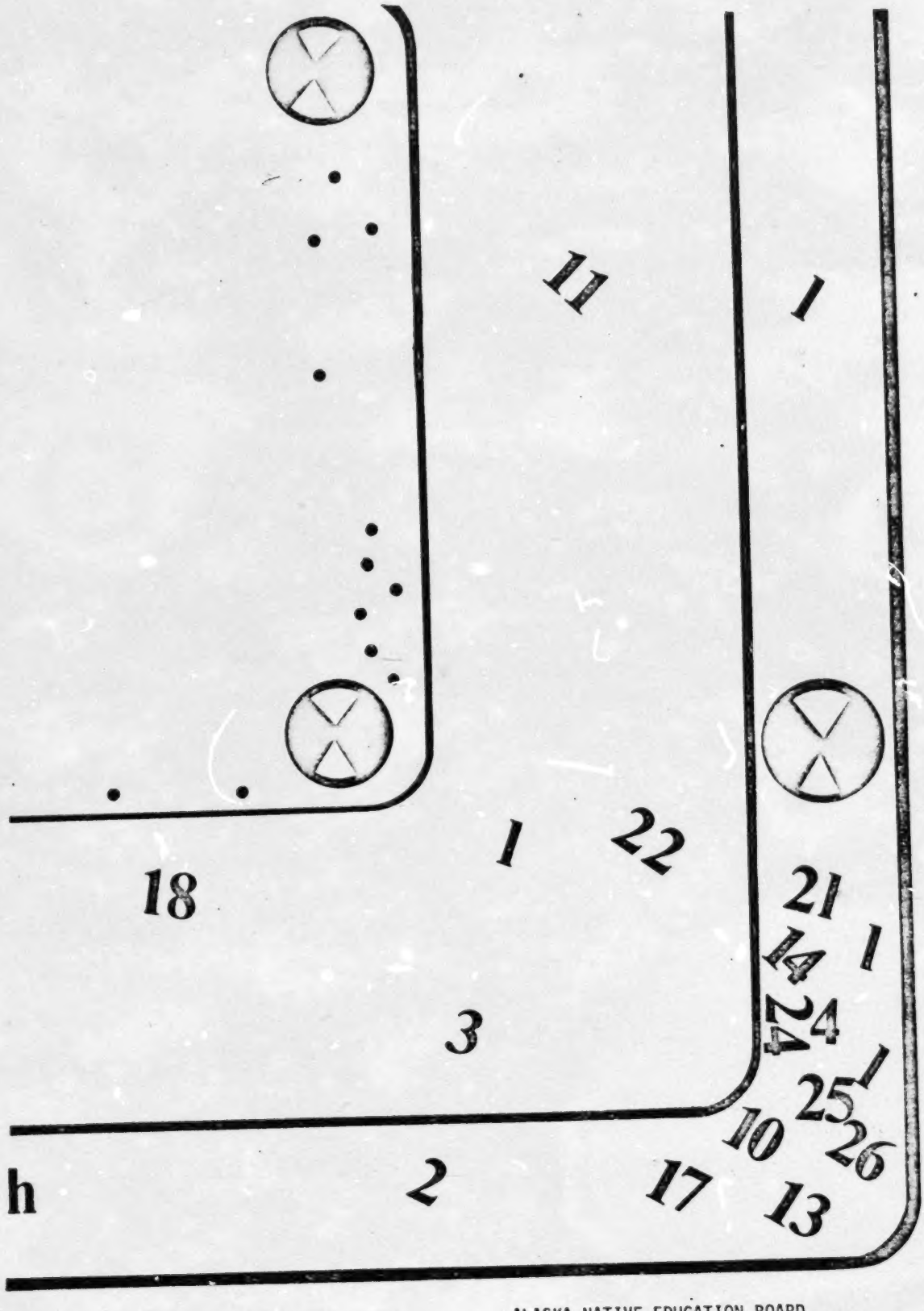

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